NAXOS

ENESCU

2 CDs

Oedipe

Pederson • Silins • Damiani • Lipovšek
Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera
Michael Gielen

WIENER STAATS OPER LIVE

George

ENESCU

(1881-1955)

Oedipe, Op. 23 (Tragédie lyrique en 4 actes et 6 tableaux)

Libretto by Edmond Fleg

Oedipe . . . . . **Monte Pederson, Bass-baritone**
Tirésias . . . . . **Egils Silins, Bass**
Créon . . . . . **Davide Damiani, Baritone**
Le berger (The Shepherd) . . . . . **Michael Roider, Tenor**
Le grand prêtre (The High Priest) . . . . . **Goran Simić, Bass**
Phorbas . . . . . **Peter Köves, Bass**
Le veilleur (The Watchman) . . . . . **Walter Fink, Bass**
Thésée . . . . . **Yu Chen, Baritone**
Laïos . . . . . **Josef Hopferwieser, Tenor**
Jocaste/La Sphinge (The Sphinx) . . **Marjana Lipovšek, Mezzo-soprano**
Antigone . . . . . **Ruxandra Donose, Soprano**
Mérope . . . . . **Mihaela Ungureanu, Mezzo-soprano**

Chorus of the Vienna State Opera
Répétiteur: Erwin Ortner
Vienna Boys Choir
Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera
Stage Orchestra of the Austrian Federal Theatres
Michael Gielen

CD 1 **63:53**

Act I (Prologue)

1 **Prelude**	4:31
2 Roi Laïos, en ta maison (Women, High Priest, Warriors, Shepherds, Creon)	6:56
3 Les Dieux ont béni l'enfant (High Priest, Jocasta, Laius, Tiresias, Chorus)	8:11

Act II

Scene 1

4 Mais l'éxil éternel! (Oedipus, Phorbas, Chorus)	6:11
5 Pourquoi trembler, mon fils? (Merope, Oedipus)	6:49

Scene 2

6 Est-ce déjà le Roi? (Shepherd, Oedipus, Laius)	10:29

Scene 3

7 De l'aurore à l'aurore (Watchman, Oedipus, Sphinx)	15:04
8 Ho! Ho! Réveillez-vous, Thébains! (Watchman, Oedipus, Thebans, Chorus)	5:43

CD 2 **64:33**

Act III

1 Oh! Oh! Hélas! Hélas! (Chorus, Oedipus, High Priest, Creon)	9:04
2 Divin Tirésias, très cher, très grand (Oedipus, Tiresias, Creon, Chorus)	6:02
3 Qu'entends-je, Oedipe? (Jocasta, Oedipus, Chorus, Shepherds, Phorbas)	12:37
4 Ouvrez les portes! (Oedipus, Chorus, Antigone, Creon)	11:39

Act IV (Epilogue)

5 Bienveillantes! Bienfaisantes! (Chorus, Theseus, Oedipus, Antigone)	10:09
6 Père! Père! Créon! Je vois Créon! (Antigone, Creon, Oedipus, Chorus)	15:02

George Enescu (1881-1955)

Oedipe

Arnold Schoenberg and Igor Stravinsky may rightly be regarded as the ancestors of modern music, since all schools and tendencies in music of the twentieth century lead back in some form to one or other of them. There were, however, also composers who remained outsiders and found their own distinctive musical language. Interestingly these outsiders appeared particularly in East Europe, possibly in conjunction with the national trends that these regions had undergone in the second half of the nineteenth century and as a consequence of which many composers discovered their own folk-music as an important source of inspiration. Among these composers may be counted Béla Bartók in Hungary, Leoš Janáček in Moravia, Karol Szymanowski in Poland and George Enescu in Romania.

George Enescu was one of the most fascinating personalities in music in the first half of the twentieth century. He was born in 1881, spent his childhood on his parents' estate in the country, where he soon showed his unusual musical gifts. At the age of seven he went to Vienna, where for six years at the Conservatory he studied piano, harmony and the violin, this last with Joseph Hellmesberger the younger, a famous violin teacher of the time. In Vienna Enescu came to know personally Johannes Brahms, whom the boy greatly admired, and in the Court Opera, which he often visited, he became an ardent admirer of Richard Wagner. Many years later, in 1921, he was to conduct the first Romanian performance of *Lohengrin* at the opening of the Bucharest State Opera.

In 1895 Enescu moved to Paris, where he studied composition with Ambroise Thomas, Jules Massenet, and above all Gabriel Fauré, with whom he met Maurice Ravel, composer of *Boléro*. Already in 1898 Enescu for the first time caused a sensation with his two *Romanian Rhapsodies*, which remain today his most popular works. Yet in spite of this success he followed no direct course as a composer, appearing, with his wealth of musical gifts, as a conductor, pianist and chamber musician as well as an acclaimed violin virtuoso. He was, moreover, an important violin teacher, with Arthur Grumiaux, Ida Haendel, Christian Ferras and Yehudi Menuhin among his most famous pupils.

All these abilities prevented Enescu from composing, so that the list of his completed works is relatively short. With opus numbers amounting only to 33 compositions there are also some songs and occasional works. This versatility may be responsible for the limited list of Enescu's works and also, paradoxical as it may sound, his phenomenal musical memory. Enescu composed many works in his head, but never found the time to write them out, very much to the loss of posterity, since in his compositions hardly a single work of lesser significance can be found.

At the beginning of his career as a composer Enescu was influenced by various musical trends. There were works that tended towards neo-classicism, while in others neo-romantic or neo-baroque tendencies can be noted. As a 35-year-old, however, Enescu underwent a radical change. From then on he strove for an individual musical language and finally found it. Fundamentally he kept to classical tonality, but extended it through certain shifts of harmony and through the use of quarter tones, such as had been used for centuries in the folk-music of his native Romania, to be traced back possibly to antiquity. Yet Enescu's musical language was marked by a special quality: everything flows, is in constant motion, no theme is heard a second time in its original form, but is always varied and changed.

Among those works in which Enescu's musical language can be heard at its clearest may be counted the *Third Symphony,* the three *Violin Sonatas* and the opera *Oedipe*, the only stage work that he wrote. This opera is his *magnum opus*, the work dearest of all to him. The creative process stretched over almost a quarter of a century. Already in 1906 Enescu decided to write an opera, but it was only three years later that the

underlying theme of the opera became clear to him. After a performance at the Comédie-française in Paris, where he saw the *Oedipus Rex* of Sophocles, he decided to use this myth. Now it was necessary to look out for a librettist. This Enescu finally found in the French writer Edmond Fleg, who wrote the libretto in French. It is divided into four acts and spans, unlike the tragedy of Sophocles which offers the spectator the past in narrative, a great arch from the birth of Oedipus to his death. The first and fourth acts are rather quietly epic in character, while the two middle acts foment the drama.

The collaboration with his librettist Edmond Fleg was at first interrupted by the First World War. Enescu returned to Romania where, after the end of the war, he did much to build up the musical life of the country. In 1921 he and Fleg resumed work, with the composition largely finished in the same year. Nevertheless a further ten years were to pass before Enescu could complete the instrumentation.

In his score the composer daringly offers unusual sounds. The scene at the crossroads is imbued with a mysterious atmosphere. The sound of thunder is heard, against a background of which the shepherd sounds a plaintive song on his flute. There follows a monologue by Oedipus in which he curses the gods. Now the storm breaks out, a wind-machine is heard and at the climax, when the orchestra unleashes its whole strength, Oedipus kills King Laius. The following scene too, that with the Sphinx, is brilliantly effective. The wakening of the Sphinx is accompanied by music of true splendour and almost excessive refinement, her cry of death taken up and continued by a musical saw.

The first performance of *Oedipe* took place on 13th March 1936 at the Paris Opéra and was a great success. In spite of that, it could not at first be kept in the repertoire, since its performance made considerable demands. Only in 1955, directly after Enescu's death, was there a radio production in France and three years later it was played for the first time in Bucharest in a Romanian translation. There it immediately entered the repertoire as the most important opera of the country. Gradually Enescu's *Oedipe* won recognition outside Romania as one of the most fascinating operas of the twentieth century. The present coproduction between the Berlin Deutsche Oper and the Vienna State Opera had its première on 29th May 1997, offered here in a live recording.

Peter Blaha
Chief Dramaturg of the Vienna State Opera
English version by Keith Anderson

Synopsis

CD 1

Act I (Prologue)

1 The orchestral prelude includes themes that will appear in the opera, including the theme associated with Fate, parricide and the victory of man. The music is interrupted by cries of a woman in child-birth.

2 The scene is a room in the palace of Laius, its great columns garlanded with flowers, its walls of marble ornamented with archaic sculptures. At the back are double bronze doors and in the centre an altar with sacred torches, dedicated to the images of the ancestors. Laius is seated on a throne, by the side of the cradle of Oedipus, while his mother Jocasta lies on a bed, covered with animal skins The blind prophet Tiresias, motionless and unsmiling, is present in the otherwise joyful ceremony, like the ghost of Fate. Others present include Theban warriors with Creon, the brother of Jocasta, the women of Thebes and shepherds, around the altar, where the High Priest presides, with priestesses. The women express their joy at the waking of the child. The High Priest calls on them to crown the waters of Dirce with olive. The men call for a paean from the seven towers of Thebes and the High Priest bids them plunge the torches into the sacred water. The men summon the nymph Echo to announce the birth of a son and the High Priest commands them to pour water

on the head of the child. He prays to the gods and offerings are made, and the Theban warriors and Creon offer arrows and a bow of gold. The High Priest bids the King present his child to the ancestors, the others echoing his prayers to Agenor, Cadmus, and then to Amphion and Zethus, Polydorus and Labdacus.

3 Laius sets the child down in his cradle and the High Priest declares the approval of the ancestors. He asks the King what name he proposes for the child. Jocasta wonders if her child will, like Orpheus, tame the beasts of the forest, and Laius suggests that he may, like Heracles, be fearless. Tiresias, however, interrupts, recalling that Apollo had told Laius in a dream that he should die childless; he has defied the god, in begetting a son, and the child will be his father's murderer and marry his mother, to be the father of his own brothers. He tells the company to disperse and cleanse themselves from impurity in the sunlight. Laius and Jocasta are left alone. The King calls to a shepherd and, taking the child and bidding him expose the baby in the gorge of Mount Cithaeron, signals to him that the child must die the following day. The shepherd goes slowly out, bearing the child, and Laius and Jocasta are left to weep over their loss.

Act II

Scene 1

4 The scene is a room in the palace of Polybus at Corinth. It is evening and Oedipus muses sadly. He is summoned to join his supposed parents, Polybus and Merope, by Phorbas, urging him to join his companions in celebrating the feast of Aphrodite, to whom the image of Adonis is being carried, in her temple on the Acropolis. Oedipus refuses, as Phorbas goes. Alone he suggests that Phoebus has other loves prepared for him. Women are heard singing in honour of Aphrodite. Merope enters, unnoticed at first by Oedipus.

5 Merope is anxious that, since his return from Delphi, Oedipus has withdrawn into himself. A man in his cups had called him a foundling, a charge Merope rejects, swearing that he is her son. At Delphi, though, when he made his sacrifice after victory in the games, the laurel-wreath on the altar had trembled and the water of Castalia ceased to flow; a voice had demanded why he brought impurity to the temple, one who would be the murderer of his father and marry his mother, to be the father of murderous offspring. He is determined to go, far away from his country, to conquer Fate.

Scene 2

6 The plaintive sound of the shepherd's pipe is heard. The scene is a crossroads, with a statue of Hecate. The shepherd is sitting on a rock, with some mountain goats grazing nearby. The atmosphere ie oppressive, stormy, with yellow clouds, mist and the sound of distant thunder. He seems to hear a chariot approaching, shudders when he sees the statue of Hecate, hiding his eyes and praying to the goddess to avert her eyes from his pasture and flocks. He starts playing again, climbing slowly with his flock over the rocks, to disappear in the mist. Oedipus enters slowly, wondering which turning to take at this junction of three roads. He has travelled far to escape his destiny, but sees only the hatred of the gods, lamenting the injustice that he seems to suffer, pursued by the Erinyes with their serpents and whips. He regrets Corinth, his home, deciding, for the moment, to return, but perhaps this is a trap set by the gods; he wonders why he was not killed at birth or cast out to the wild animals, cursing his fate. The shepherd is briefly heard, when the chariot of Laius appears, with its driver and a Theban warrior. The driver raises his whip to clear Oedipus from the King's path, and Laius tries to strike him with his sceptre, to be killed by a blow from Oedipus. He kills the guard and charioteer and the horses take flight, while Oedipus resumes his way. The shepherd, descending from the rocks, sees the King dead, with his two followers.

Scene 3

7 The ramparts of Thebes can be seen with a tower and the city gate, closed. In the rocky landscape a road leads to the city. Partly hidden by a rock the Sphinx sleeps. It is a starry night. The watchman from the tower tells how he watches from dawn to dawn. The Thebans and the Sphinx, who brings death, sleep. The voice of Oedipus is heard, telling of the happiness of one who dies on the day of his birth and still more one who dies before he is born. The watchman thinks his words will waken the Sphinx, as Oedipus approaches. He tells him of the danger that lurks, of the monster that preys on the Thebans, whose parched bones lie around her; she poses unanswerable riddles to travellers, who are then killed; whoever answers the riddle will receive the crown of Thebes and the hand of Queen Jocasta. Oedipus calls on the Sphinx, Echidna, to awake. She slowly wakens, her wings start to tremble and then rise in the air. The Sphinx declares that in her eternal dream she has waited for Oedipus, who demands a riddle. She is the daughter of Fate, to which everything is subject, the lyre of Phoebus, the arrows of Artemis, the caduceus of Hermes, the lance of Athena, Uranus and Chronos, and soon Zeus too. She asks if he can name anything greater than Destiny. His answer is 'Man'. She asks, as she dies, whether she laughs at her death or her victory.

8 Dawn breaks and the watchman calls the Thebans to awake, climb on the ramparts and sound the trumpet, for the city is saved. The crowd gathers, singing out in joy at the deliverance of Thebes, and welcoming their saviour Oedipus, now united with Jocasta.

CD 2

Act III

1 The curtain rises on a public square in Thebes. On one side is a temple and on the other the palace of Oedipus. A crowd of men, women and children prostrate themselves on the steps of the palace, while funeral processions pass by. They lament their fate, pleading for help from Oedipus. The High Priest, their spokesman, tells of the plague that brings death to the city. Oedipus tells them that he has sent Creon to Delphi to learn Apollo's command. Creon enters, with his followers, declaring that he has found the answer to their troubles; their houses are defiled by a murderer, the murderer of Laius, who is in the city; the body has been discovered by a shepherd, but Creon has also summoned Tiresias. Oedipus calls on the murderer to reveal himself, otherwise he will be cursed, to die of the plague, his body, unburied, to be devoured by crows. Tiresias appears, led in by a boy.

2 Oedipus calls on Tiresias to reveal the truth. The old man declares it hard to see, when seeing is useless. Oedipus accuses him of refusing to speak, but Tiresias tells him that that day he will see himself born and dead. Oedipus, in anger, declares that Tiresias is the murderer, but he reveals that it is Oedipus himself who is the murderer of Laius. Oedipus suggests that Creon is behind this, but Tiresias that Oedipus is his own enemy. Oedipus accuses the old man of remaining silent about the riddle of the Sphinx, but he tells the King that truth remains, urging him not to mock the blind, since he himself will be blind that very day. The murderer was born in Thebes and will leave it a pauper, blind and weeping: Oedipus, who killed his own father; he warns him that before the day is out he will himself find the murderer. Tiresias is led away, and Oedipus accuses Creon of plotting against him.

3 Jocasta seeks to learn the cause of the anger of her husband, bidding him pardon Creon. She comes between them, and Creon leaves. Oedipus tells her that Creon had used Tiresias to accuse him of murdering Laius. She tells him that Laius was killed by robbers at a place where three roads meet. The shepherd comes timidly before them, as he questions her about Laius, his age, his appearance, his companions. The shepherd interrupts, telling them that there were three people, all killed. Phorbas, now an old man, comes in, seeking the

King, whom he greets, calling on Phoebus to protect him, the Queen and the whole house; his master Polybus and Merope have sent him to seek the return of Oedipus to Corinth. Oedipus refuses, revealing the words of the oracle, but Phorbas tells him that they are not his real parents. His parents had ordered their child to be exposed on the mountain, from where Phorbas had taken him, given him by a shepherd on Mount Cithaeron to be the foundling son of the King of Corinth, replacing the dead son of the King. The shepherd is there before them, but Jocasta urges Oedipus not to question him. Under threats of punishment, however, the shepherd reveals the fact that the baby was given him by Laius, after a prophecy that the child would live to kill his father and marry his mother. Cries of horror are heard from within, and one of the women runs in to announce the suicide of Jocasta. Oedipus rushes into the palace.

4 From within Oedipus calls for the doors to be opened. He appears, his eyes put out, their sockets bleeding. As he attempts to come down, the people recoil from him. Now, the father of his brothers, the husband of his mother, the killer of his father, the slayer of the Sphinx, saviour of the city, one day in glory and then in misfortune; he laments the fate that is his, now in eternal night. Antigone and her sister appear, and Oedipus laments their future, to live alone. Creon tells Oedipus he must go and take with him the plague, a sentiment echoed by the Thebans. Antigone promises to go with him, and they leave together, as the people lament the fate of the house of Laius.

Act IV (Epilogue)

5 It is Attica, by a sacred grove. To the left is a rock, by a spring, to the right a marble altar, and at the entrance to the grove a bronze plaque sunk in the ground. The day is calm and a group of old Athenians has come to pray at the sacred place. Some carry torches, others honey-cakes, which they place on the altar and burn, while others carry branches wound about with wool, which they set round the altar. Theseus prays to the gods, at one time the Erinyes, but now the kindly Eumenides, replacing homicidal vengeance with justice and peace in the city. They leave in slow procession. Oedipus, now an old man, is led in by Antigone, who tells him that they are near Athens, by a wood where the nightingale sings with the sound of the fountains, and the laurel and wild vine grow, saffron and olive-tree. Oedipus asks if there are branches and garlands there around an altar. He tells her that they have reached their goal and bids her lead him to the fountain, dip her fingers in the water, and place her hands on his face; here at last he can find rest.

6 Antigone sees Creon, come to invite Oedipus to return to his own country, to rule again. Oedipus accuses Creon of hypocrisy, seeking someone to save the kingdom of Thebes from enemies. The Thebans who have accompanied Creon join their pleas to Creon's; the oracle has given victory to the soil that his body, sanctified by suffering, touches, but Oedipus will not follow Creon, who orders Antigone to be seized. With difficulty Oedipus rises and addresses a silent prayer to the gods, but Antigone is saved by the arrival of Theseus and the old Athenians. She kneels before Theseus, who offers her his hand, while Creon tells Theseus that he should have nothing to do with an old man, a vagabond, guilty of incest and parricide. Oedipus interrupts to claim he is guilty of nothing: his crimes were decreed by Fate before he was born and he has fought against the gods, leaving Corinth for love of his supposed parents, defending himself at the crossroads and saving Thebes by defeating the Sphinx, a victory rewarded by an incestuous marriage; Creon, in advertising the evils that Oedipus has undergone, sullies the memory of Jocasta, while the Thebans who banished him, the saviour and father of the country, were the true parricides; he was innocent, never willingly committing these crimes, and now has conquered Fate. The voices of the Eumenides are heard, calling him; they have marked out a secret place here for his final rest, and this Theseus alone will know, while the one who has conquered Fate brings victory again. The Eumenides are heard, as he bids

farewell to Antigone, the only one to be faithful to him. He tells Theseus to follow him into the grove, whence he will take his eternal journey, dying in the light. He goes, followed by Theseus, to whom he shows the way, passing through the trees, as the old Athenians pray, calling for blessing on those that are pure in heart. There is a sound of thunder and Oedipus disappears near a cave from which suddenly a dazzling light shines out. Theseus falls on his knees, covering his face. Gradually the light fades and the voices of the Eumenides are heard, blessing those that are pure in heart. The leaves of the trees are gently stirred, lit by the glowing beams of the setting sun.

Keith Anderson

Monte Pederson

Monte Pederson was born in 1958 in Sunnyside, Washington, and started his career at the San Francisco Opera, appearing as Donner in *Das Rheingold*, Orest in *Elektra* and as Wagner's Dutchman. He made his European début in 1988 at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin with Orest, followed by Klingsor in Vienna, at La Scala, Milan, and in Houston. He appeared as Max in *Der Freischütz*, Escamillo, Pizarro in *Fidelio*, Orest, Jochanaan, and Amfortas in Vienna. He made his Salzburg Festival début as Shishkov in Janáček's *From the House of the Dead*, continuing with Rangoni in *Boris Godunov* and Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*. At La Scala, Milan, he sang Wotan in *Das Rheingold* and the Wanderer in *Siegfried*, in Naples Jochanaan and in Hamburg the title-rôle of *Der fliegende Holländer*. He died in Germany in 2001, after a long illness.

Egils Silins

Born in Riga in 1961, Egils Silins studied at the Lithuanian Music Academy there. He won various prizes in singing competitions in Vienna, Paris, Hamburg, Barcelona, Bilbao, Toulouse and Washington, and made his début at the Lithuanian National Opera in Riga as Boito's Mefistofele, subsequently joining the ensemble of the Frankfurt Opera and the Basel Theatre. He made his breakthrough in 1996 with his Méphistophélès in Gounod's *Faust* at the Vienna Volksoper, where his later rôles have included Boris Godunov. His rôles at the Vienna State Opera have included Boito's Mefistofele, Sir Giorgio in *I Puritani*, Prefetto in *Linda di Chamounix,* Phanuel in *Hérodiade* and Procida in *I vespri siciliani*. He has appeared as a guest artist in Geneva, Glyndebourne, the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Stuttgart, the Bregenz Festival and Zurich. Other performances include appearances in *Linda di Chamounix* at La Scala, Milan, as Basilio at the New York Metropolitan Opera and in Handel's *Rinaldo* at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich.

Davide Damiani

Davide Damiani first studied conducting, composition and double bass at the Rossini Conservatory in Pesaro, then in Parma and in Bologna. In 1990 he continued his studies in Vienna, embarking on vocal training with Hilde Zadek, and continuing with Tamar Rachum in Israel and Alberto Zedda in Pesaro. In 1992 he made his début as Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Festival del Garda. Successful guest appearances include Don Giovanni in 1993 at the Tel Aviv Opera, Orfeo in Monteverdi's opera in Zurich and in 1995 at the Salzburg Festival. He was engaged by the Vienna State Opera in 1995, appearing as Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore*, as the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte* and Harlekin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

Michael Roider

Born in Salzburg, Michael Roider studied the violin and singing at the Mozarteum Musikhochschule. His early career was as a violinist, but after winning several singing competitions, in 1978 he embarked on a career as a singer. His first engagements were at the theatres of Basel and Lucerne and at the Graz Opera, where he undertook, among other rôles, that of Vanya in *Katya Kabanová*, the title-rôle in Giuseppe Gazzaniga's *Don Giovanni*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* and the title-rôle of *Der Graf von Luxemburg*. Further guest appearances took him to the Salzburg Landestheater, to Karlsruhe, Berne, Zurich, Leipzig and the Vienna Volksoper. In 1999 he joined the Vienna State Opera, having made his début there in February 1995 as the Officer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, later appearing as Arbace in *Idomeneo*, Herod in *Salome*, the Painter in *Lulu*, Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Captain Vere in *Billy Budd*, Laca in *Jenůfa* and as Eisenstein. In the 2004-2005 season he sang his first Loge in *Das Rheingold*, the Captain in *Wozzeck* and Aegisth in *Elektra*.

Goran Simić

Goran Simić was born in Belgrade and studied there at the Musikhochschule and in Sarajevo. He won various singing prizes including at the 1982 Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and the 1985 Pavarotti Competition. From 1978 to 1984 he was with the Sarajevo Opera, before joining the Vienna State Opera, where he made his début as the Watchman in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. His subsequent rôles in Vienna have included those of the King in *Aida*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, Montano and Lodovico in *Otello*, Pietro in *Simon Boccanegra*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Zuniga in *Carmen*, Fouquier Tinville in *Andrea Chénier*, Titurel in *Parsifal*, Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Lord Walton in *I Puritani*.

Peter Köves

Born in Hungary, Peter Köves studied first in Budapest, before completing his studies at the Vienna Musikhochschule. From 1985 to 1987 he was a member of the Vienna State Opera Studio. He made his début at the house in 1985 as the Cappadocian in *Salome*. His repertoire includes the rôles of Colline in *La Bohème*, Lodovico in *Otello*, Antonio and Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Kuno in *Der Freischütz*, Zuniga in *Carmen*, Graf Lamoral in *Arabella*, Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Luther in *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, Hobson in *Peter Grimes*, the One-Armed in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Adhémar de Monteil in *Jérusalem* and the Cardinal in *Rienzi*. He has also collaborated in a number of children's theatre productions.

Walter Fink

Born in Bregenz, Walter Fink completed his education in Vienna, studying singing and ancient philology. He joined the Opera Studio of the Vienna State Opera in 1977, making his first appearance in the house in the same year as the gaoler in *Tosca*. From 1982 to 1991 he worked in Bremen, before returning to join the company at the Vienna State Opera. Guest appearances have taken him to Berlin, Lyon, the Bregenz Festival, Toulouse, Mannheim and Düsseldorf. At the Vienna State Opera he has undertaken some seventy rôles in more than 650 performances, including Sarastro, Osmin, Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Rocco in *Fidelio*, Kaspar in *Der Freischütz*, Varlaam in *Boris Godunov*, King Henry in *Lohengrin*, Veit Pogner in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Titurel in *Parsifal*, Daland in *Der fliegende Holländer*, Fafner in *Siegfried*, Melcthal in *Guillaume Tell* and Cardinal Brogni in *La juive*. In 2001 he was awarded the title of Kammersänger.

Yu Chen

Yu Chen first studied the violin, starting vocal studies at the Beijing Conservatory in 1979, profiting from coaching in China by Gino Becchi and making his début as Figaro in Mozart's opera. Subsequent engagements included appearances as Papageno and as Giorgio Germont. In 1985 Yu Chen came to Paris, where he undertook further study at the Ecole Normale de Musique. In 1991 he joined the chorus of the Paris Opéra, while continuing to cultivate his voice as a lyric baritone with rôles such as Valentin in *Faust* and Escamillo in *Carmen*. He was engaged by the Vienna State Opera in 1997 and since 2003 has been with the Deutsche Oper in Berlin.

Josef Hopferwieser

Son of a Graz organ-builder, Josef Hopferwieser at first ran a car-spraying business, turning to vocal studies in 1960. In 1964 he began his career at the Brunswick State Theatre, making his début as Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. From 1967 to 1969 he was at the Essen Opera and from 1969 to 1973 at the opera in Frankfurt-am-Main, where his rôles included those of Alva in *Lulu*, Tom Rakewell in *The Rake's Progress,* Verdi's *Don Carlos,* Riccardo in *Un ballo in maschera* and Don José in *Carmen*. In 1973 he moved to the Vienna State Opera, where his rôles included in 1990 that of Walther von Stolzing in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, with further Heldentenor rôles in Wagner repertoire. In 1988 he sang Erik in *Der fliegende Holländer*, Froh in *Das Rheingold* in 1987 in Munich, and Herod in *Salome* in Vienna in 1994. He has made guest appearances in Stuttgart, Hamburg and Graz, and particularly at the Vienna Volksoper. He took part in the 1986 première of Aribert Reimann's *Troades* in Munich.

Marjana Lipovšek

Marjana Lipovšek comes from a musical family from Ljubljana. She first studied the piano and musical pedagogy in her native city, going on to study singing in Graz and Vienna. She then joined the Vienna State Opera, appearing as Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. Since then she has appeared in major rôles in the leading opera houses of the world. Rôles such as Octavian, Dorabella, Marina (*Boris Godunov*) and Ulrica (*Un ballo in maschera*) she sang first in Hamburg. She undertook her first Dalila in *Samson et Dalila* at the Bregenz Festival, winning acclaim, as she had for her first Carmen. With virtually the complete Strauss and Wagner repertoire suited to her voice, from Amme, Klytämnestra and Gaea to Fricka, Waltraute, Brangäne and Erda, she includes in her favourite repertoire rôles such as Azucena, Amneris and Mistress Quickly. At the Bavarian State Opera in Munich she has sung in productions of *Elektra*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Rheingold* and *Falstaff* and in San Francisco has appeared in a complete *Ring* cycle. She has sung *Elektra* at the New York Metropolitan Opera and in *Die Walküre* in Chicago. She is a Vienna and Bavaria Kammersängerin.

Ruxandra Donose

Having first studied the piano at the Music Academy in her native Bucharest, Ruxandra Donose won an early reputation as a pianist, triumphing in 1982 in the Vercelli Piano Competition. At the same time she studied singing in Bucharest and, among others, with Lore Fischer at the Salzburg Mozarteum. In 1991 she won a prize in the Munich ARD Competition and the 1991 Marion Anderson Concours in Maryland. She started her stage career in Basel, in 1992 making her début at the Vienna State Opera as Varvara in *Katya Kabanová*, also in the same year at the Salzburg Festival. Her career has continued with guest appearances in many international opera houses, with rôles including those of Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Cenerentola, Dorabella and Carmen.

Mihaela Ungureanu

Mihaela Ungureanu studied in her native Bucharest and began her career in various Romanian opera houses. In a series of tours in which she sang rôles such as Cherubino, Olga in *Eugene Onegin* and Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, she became known in the west. In 1995 she joined the ensemble of the Vienna State Opera and Vienna Volksoper, making her début in Verdi's *Nabucco*. The performance of Enescu's *Oedipe* in 1997 was her first major rôle at the Vienna State Opera, where she has since appeared in various new productions.

The Vienna Boys Choir

Die Wiener Sängerknaben, the world-famous Vienna Boys Choir, was established in 1924 as successor to the Hof-Sängerknaben (Court Choristers) founded by the Austrian emperor in the late middle ages. The Wiener Sängerknaben are also a private society with their own school and boarding-school. Boys normally join the choir at the age of seven or eight and stay in the choir until their voices break. The Wiener Sängerknaben normally are divided into several choir groups, going on tour all over the world and taking over special tasks in concert and opera.

The Vienna State Opera

In 1918 when Austria changed from the Austrian-Hungarian empire to the Austrian Republic, the Court Opera became the Vienna State Opera, with the musicians in the orchestra and the singers in the chorus members of Austrian public services. Beside their official duties the members of the orchestra constitute a private society, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 1842 by members of the orchestra of the Court Opera, to provide an outstanding concert orchestra for Vienna. The Vienna Philharmonic consists only of musicians who were members of the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, but not each member of this orchestra is necessarily a member of the Vienna Philharmonic. Membership of the world-famous Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra demands the special agreement of all colleagues. In 1927 the chorus of the Vienna State Opera founded a private choral society called the Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsopernchor to provide an outstanding concert choir in addition to the singers' duties in the Opera House. The orchestra and the chorus of the Vienna State Opera take part in every rehearsal and performance of the Vienna State Opera during the season from 1st September to 30th June. For all performances apart from their official duties, concerts in Vienna, on tour or special appearances, for example at the Salzburg Festival or for studio recordings, they use their private names, the Wiener Philharmoniker (Vienna Philharmonic) and Konzertvereinigung Wiener Staatsopernchor (Concert Union of the Vienna State Opera Chorus).

The Bühnenorchester der Österreichischen Bundestheater (Stage Orchestra of the Austrian Federal Theatres) was founded after the war to carry out special tasks on stage at the Vienna State Opera, Vienna Volksoper and the Burgtheater. They are not members of the normal orchestras. In 1999, when the Austrian Federal Theatres were reorganized, the Stage Orchestra of the Austrian Federal Theatres was affiliated to the Vienna State Opera, thus becoming the Stage Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera.

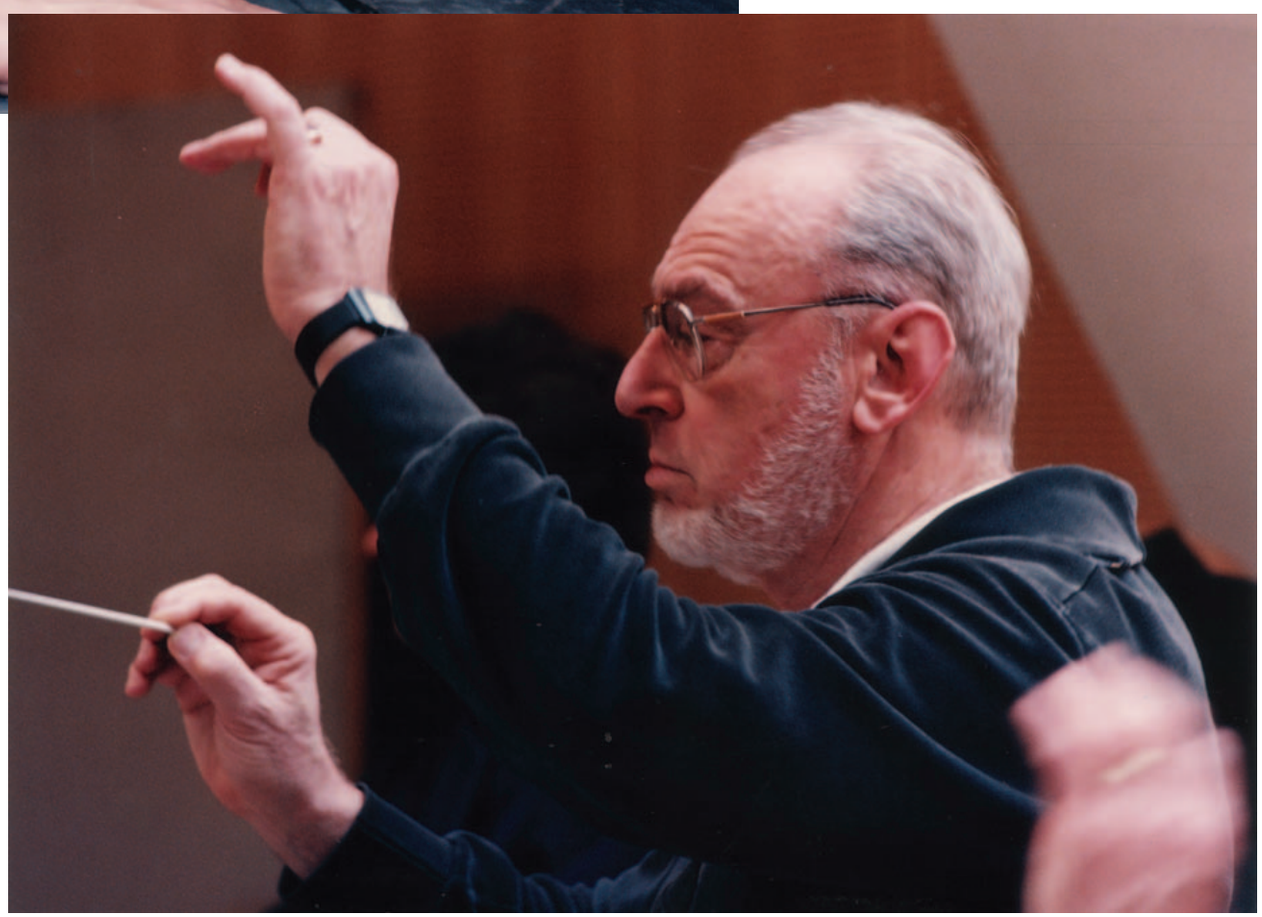
Michael Gielen

Born in Dresden in 1927, the son of the stage and theatre director Joseph Gielen, Michael Gielen studied with Erwin Leuchter in Buenos Aires from 1942 to 1949 and then with Josef Polnauer in Vienna from 1950 to 1953. He began his career as a choral répétiteur at the Teatro Colón and from 1950 at the Vienna State Opera, where he served as conductor from 1952 until 1960. Until 1965 he was principal conductor of the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm and in 1965 conducted the first performance of Bernd Alois Zimmermann's opera *Die Soldaten*. After several years as principal conductor of the Belgian Radio Symphony Orchestra and work as a guest-conductor, particularly in German radio stations, in 1972 he took charge of the Netherlands Opera. From 1977 to 1987 he was music director of the Frankfurt-am-Main Opera and at the same time, from 1980 to 1986, served as music director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. In 1979 he also took up appointment as permanent guest-conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London. From 1986 he took over the direction of the Baden-Baden Radio Symphony Orchestra and until his emeritus appointment in 1995 directed the conducting class at the Salzburg Mozarteum. Michael Gielen has given many first performances of important contemporary works.

Above: Oedipus (Monte Pederson) and Jocaste (Marjana Lipovšek)

Right: The High Priest (Goran Simić) and Jocaste (Marjana Lipovšek)

Below and right: Oedipus
(Monte Pederson)



Above: Oedipus
(Monte Pederson)

Right: Michael Gielen

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ENESCU: Oedipe

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The Romanian composer George Enescu was one of the most fascinating and versatile musicians in the first half of the twentieth century. His only opera, *Oedipe*, was the object of his intermittent attention over some fifteen years and was eventually given its première at the Paris Opéra in 1936, when it won great success. Unlike the play by Sophocles, from which Enescu drew his inspiration, its first and last acts trace the story from the birth of Oedipus to his death, with the dramatic events at the heart of the tragedy in the central two acts. The scoring shows the greatest originality, while the musical language is unique to Enescu, with its shifting harmonies and thematic transformations.

wiener staatsoper

ORF

WIENER STAATS OPER LIVE

George ENESCU
(1881-1955)

Oedipe

Oedipe	Monte Pederson, Bass-baritone
Tirésias	Egils Silins, Bass
Créon	Davide Damiani, Baritone
Le berger (The Shepherd)	Michael Roider, Tenor
Le grand prêtre (The High Priest)	Goran Simić, Bass
Phorbas	Peter Köves, Bass
Le veilleur (The Watchman)	Walter Fink, Bass
Thésée	Yu Chen, Baritone
Laïos	Josef Hopferwieser, Tenor
Jocaste/La Sphinge (The Sphinx)	Marjana Lipovšek, Mezzo-soprano
Antigone	Ruxandra Donose, Soprano
Mérope	Mihaela Ungureanu, Mezzo-soprano

Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera • Vienna Boys Choir
Stage Orchestra of the Austrian Federal Theatres • Michael Gielen

CD 1	63:53	CD 2	64:33
1-3 Act I (Prologue)	19:37	1-4 Act III	39:22
4-8 Act II	44:16	5-6 Act IV (Epilogue)	25:11

A full track listing can be found on pages 2 and 3 of the booklet

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